

Testimony for Public Hearing - Appropriations Committee  
March 6, 2015

Corina O'Dea, Vice Chairperson of S.M.A.R.T., Inc.  
45 Wolfpit Road –Southbury Ct.  
S.M.A.R.T., Inc. (Local Prevention Council) for Southbury/Middlebury

**Governor's H. B. No. 6924 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM  
ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2017, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR AND OTHER  
PROVISIONS RELATED TO REVENUE.**

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, Senator Gerratana, Representative Dillon and members of the  
Appropriations Subcommittee:

My name is Corina O'Dea and I am the vice chairperson for a non-profit agency that has the responsibility of  
being our local prevention council for a regional school district. I implore you to **OPPOSE the proposed  
budget cuts under the Governor's Bill No. 6824.**

**RESTORE REGIONAL ACTION COUNCIL FUNDING- PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS RACs BY  
ALMOST 80%**

These cuts would be devastating to the invaluable work that the Regional Action Councils and Local Prevention  
Councils do across our state and a terrible disservice to the citizens of the state of Connecticut. S.M.A.R.T.,  
Inc. (Southbury & Middlebury Acting Responsibly Together) as well as the many other councils working under  
the guidance of their Regional Action Councils, work painstakingly in their communities to squeeze the most  
out of every grant dollar to provide every community in the state with education, training, and advocacy for  
substance abuse prevention and related community concerns such as behavioral health, violence, gambling,  
drunk driving, prescription drugs, opioids and suicide! In Southbury/Middlebury alone, our regional action  
council, the CNVRAC has been an integral force in the development of the following initiatives:

- TIPS (Training for Intervention Procedures) follow-up to Alcohol Compliance Checks
- Medication Management- What Everyone Should Know (provided in recent years at our local senior center)
- Narcan video discussions and education
- Promotion & coordination of a comprehensive youth risk behavior and resiliency survey conducted with all students in grades 7-12 throughout Regional School District No. 15
- Promotion & coordination of a district-wide youth-led analysis of local-level risk and protective factors affecting adolescent substance use, education, risk of suicide, bullying, safety, and other areas affecting health and wellness among young people
- Provided Grant Application technical assistance and oversight to SMART: *Southbury & Middlebury Acting Responsibly Together*, the designated Local Substance Abuse Prevention Council for my community Coordination and development of local-level Drug Endangered Child (DEC) Alliance between Police Department, Department of Children & Families, and the statewide DEC office

- Promotion & Coordination of DEC training for Law Enforcement, School Administration and Pupil Services Staff, area social service agencies, probation, parole, DCF Caseworkers, and other related professionals
- Promotion of a permanent Medication Drop Box installation and the DEA *Got Drugs?* disposal day, a cost-effective opioid deterrence measure
- Sub-regional and local training delivery: 40 Developmental Assets for Youth; Opioid Abuse Prevention Forum; Financial Wellness for Seniors and Problem Gambling Prevention Across the Lifespan; Local Prevention Council “101”; Local Prevention Council Capacity Building; Local Prevention Council TA: Prevention Strategies & Effective Service Delivery
- Development and dissemination of Opioid Overdose Wallet Card to prevent opioid overdose and deaths
- Parent University Series – Informative workshops for parents of children K-College on prevention, awareness, intervention and treatment.
- Mental Health First Aid course for community members to be knowledgeable on signs and symptoms of mental health and addiction disorders.
- A resource support for our school systems, town offices, parents and community members at large.
- Public awareness program educating communities and parents about the health and safety risks of serving alcohol at teen parties.
- Anti-smoking campaign across the age spectrum.
- Coordination & Delivery of Innovative Media Campaign on Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention
  1. Parents’ Guide to Prescription Drug Abuse Inserts in weekly, monthly, and quarterly news publications
  2. Realtor Flyers Distribution to local Boards of Realtors

In closing, I **OPPOSE the proposed budget cuts under the Governor’s Bill No. 6824**. If the state budget eliminates regional action councils, these and countless other important prevention services and local-level supports will be lost. It is my hope that I have impressed upon you the gravity of this potential budget cut, so that we may preserve our prevention infrastructure, saving long-term costs and at the end of the day, saving lives.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Corina O’Dea, S.M.A.R.T., Inc. Vice Chairperson

Southbury/Middlebury